

ordinary life of suspending judgment, just let her become an attentive reader of the daily newspapers. The lesson will have additional emphasis, besides being more entertaining, if she refuses to limit her studies to papers of one political party, and is not above taking hints from them all. On Monday you read what professes to be fact; Tuesday suggests a doubt, Wednesday deepens the doubt and Thursday shows the best of reasons why the fact of Monday should be shunted into the realms of fiction. Or it may be a case of somebody with a grievance written out large in the beginning of the week and upset, by the other side being shown, before Saturday night.

Whatever the subject—the complaints of travellers; the failings of railway companies; the woes of farmers; the promises of politicians; the demands of educationalists; the outcries of those who want and have not; explanations of mysteries; suggestions of motives for this, that, and the other thing; solutions of difficulties domestic and international—whatever it be, the same thought should have a prominent place in our minds. And that thought is, "It may be so, but is there no

chance of there being another story behind?" Often no doubt it is so, but there is seldom anything lost by our waiting till to-morrow to make up our mind.

It may be suggested that we recommend the attitude of suspicion. This is not the case. Caution is the name for it, and only the ill-natured will call caution suspicion. No other habit of thought can get us safely through the world, and she who is cautious in her judgments, not forming a hasty opinion, is a girl from whom great things may be expected.

By neglecting to hear the other side what injustice we may sometimes do, what injustice indeed have we not often done. There was a prince once and he was in love with a girl of humble origin. She was faithful and true, and everything she should be; but the courtiers about the prince, for reasons of their own, blackened her character, and so deluded their master by the plausible air of the slanders they dispersed that the prince made no inquiry about the other side, separated himself from the maiden and wedded one whom he did not love instead.

And does not the same sort of thing happen

amongst ourselves, we who are not at home in king's palaces? She has gone only a short way through the world who has not met with friends parted and lovers parted by poisonous tongues not counteracted by the influence of inquiry and common-sense.

Our aim ought ever to be to get at truth. No wise girl wants to believe in falsehood or live in a fool's paradise. For that reason the phrase, "Let us hear the other side" should be fixed in our minds, and, acting upon it, nothing should be accepted by us or asserted by us till we are sure.

It has been said that the judicial faculty is not captivating in woman. That is only true when it is wrongly exercised; when she is critical, unsympathetic, fault-finding. But that is a very different thing from a girl saying to herself, "I shall try to be perfectly fair-minded, loving the truth and always striving to find it out."

That resolution, coupled with the fear which Solomon says is the beginning of wisdom, will do more to make her grow into a useful and happy woman than almost anything else that could be named.

CACTUSES MAMILLARIA.

FOR a long time after the forties cactuses were sadly out of fashion. Their quaint shapes and rich colours fell out of favour with Chippendale chairs and rich-hued china, old-fashioned gardens and the prim alleys of the age of Anne. A few were used in carpet-bedding, but it is only lately that a careful study has been made of them.

In 1892, however, a society was formed in Berlin of friends of the cactus, and as many as half-a-dozen handbooks may now be counted, which may be consulted by the student interested in them. And yet it is strange that cactuses should ever have been neglected, so exquisite are the tints they have to show, so luxuriant their quaint and fleshy foliage.

How many travellers use the bright colours of the cactus to paint the pictures they send home to their friends in misty England!

"The ride up from the port," says John Addington Symonds, writing from Girgenti in Sicily in April of 1873, "among olive

groves and cactus plantations, through hollows where the whole air was heavy with the scent of orange-blossoms, in sight of the stupendous piled-up old Greek town, golden in the after-glow of a gorgeous sunset, was one of the most indescribably splendid experiences I have ever had."

But not to go so far afield, who does not know the cactus bed in Regent's Park, to which we come after running up and down the little hill near Chester Gate, which is such a delicious Mount Pisgah to many a little Londoner, who from there may view with keen delight the Promised Land of gorgeous flowers provided by the London County Council for thirsty eyes.

Again Froude tells us "fine flowers will grow where the thorns are sharpest, and the cactus does not lose its prickles though planted in the kindest soil. London did not suit Carlyle, but would any other place have suited him better?"

But we must pass to the more immediate consideration of these beautiful flowers.

They have many varieties of which the most widely known are the handsome *Eriphyllum* variety, and the delicate *Cereus* and *Echinopsis* kinds.

We will consider to-day the *Mamillaria*, or warty cactuses, which are less well-known, but which have peculiar kinds of prickles, and quaint shapes.

The native home of the *Mamillaria* cactuses is among the rocky precipices and high levels of Mexico, with its rich and fertile soil.

As many as three hundred kinds of *Mamillaria* cactuses are already known. They are generally club or ball-shaped, pushing sturdily up from the ground, and sometimes dividing

into pulpy arms. These warty cactuses have little hassock-shaped warts surrounding the cactus in spiral lines. In the middle of the warts are pretty little woolly cushions, in which the prickles are embedded.

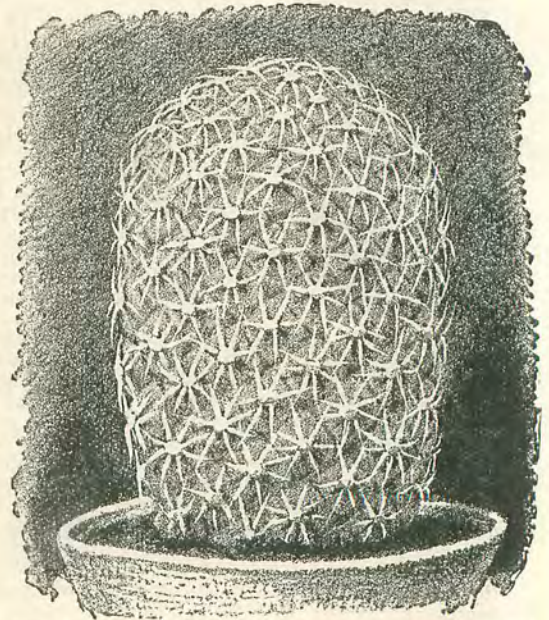


FIG. 2.—MAMILLARIA CORNIFERA (var. SCOLIMOIDES).

The (usually small) blossoms come between the tiny mounds in the upper surface of the plant; they are followed by longish berries, which gradually turn red, in which black seeds develop. The beauty of the plant lies chiefly in the bright-coloured hairy prickles, and the curious shapes it takes. The pretty little flowers often come even in the winter.

These *Mamillaria* cactuses are very good indoor plants, and thrive well at the window in a moderate temperature.

Most of them can be easily cultivated in summer, in a sunny part of the garden, but they must be protected from too great rain or sun.

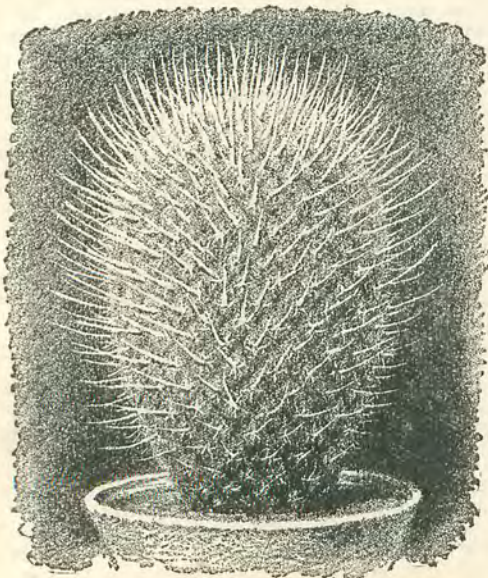


FIG. 1.—MAMILLARIA NIVEA (var. LONGISPINA).

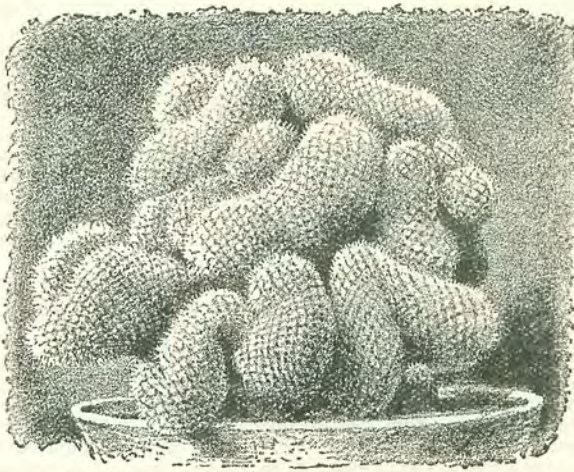


FIG. 3.—MAMILLARIA MULTICEPS (var. CRISTATA).

Care should be taken about their water-supply.

In January and December they must be kept almost wholly dry. After that they may have a little more water, and in the hot weather they may be occasionally sprayed with the rose of the garden-hose.

A great danger to cactuses is rot, so that the earth in which they grow must never become permanently moist.

Any necessary transplanting must be done in the spring, but this is not necessary every year, as the mamillaria, like other cactuses, need very little nourishment.

When larger pots become necessary, low and shallow ones should be chosen. The earth should consist of a mixture of leaf-mould, loam, and manure, with some coarse sand and gravel. The pot must have a layer of potsherds three-quarters of an inch deep at the

bottom, and the cactus must then be held in the pot with the left hand, at the same level as in the earlier pot, while earth is filled in with the right hand and pressed down fairly firmly. Cactuses have not much root, so the old earth may easily be shaken off.

Mamillaria cactuses are propagated by seeds. The bushy kinds may be increased by means of shoots separated from the mother-plants with their roots clinging to them, and planted out separately. Lastly slips may be taken.

These must be exposed for some days so as to dry the places where the incision was made, and then be set in a pot filled with sand, and kept almost wholly dry. The slips must be kept very warm and sunny.

The Mamillaria are better suited than any other cactuses for planting out in rockeries. They thrive wonderfully in rocky chinks, and are almost the only plants which are not injured at all by animals.

Fig. 1 is a warty cactus with white spines (*Mamillaria nivea longispina*). In summer it blossoms with little dark purple flowers.

Fig. 2 is a beautiful example of the horned warty cactus.

Fig. 3 is an example of the many-headed warty cactus, with strange contorted shapes like cocks' crests (*Mamillaria multiceps*, var. *Cristata*).

Fig. 4 represents a smoother example which is singularly suited to rockeries (*Mamillaria subechinata*).

I might enumerate many more kinds of Mamillaria, but those mentioned above are enough to tempt people who love experiments in gardening which may result in curious shapes and gay blossoms.

In other numbers we will consider other varieties of the cactus, and anyone who, like the writer, has experienced the pleasure of seeing the exquisite beauty of the great night-flowering cactus, will feel that research in cactus-lore is indeed its own reward.

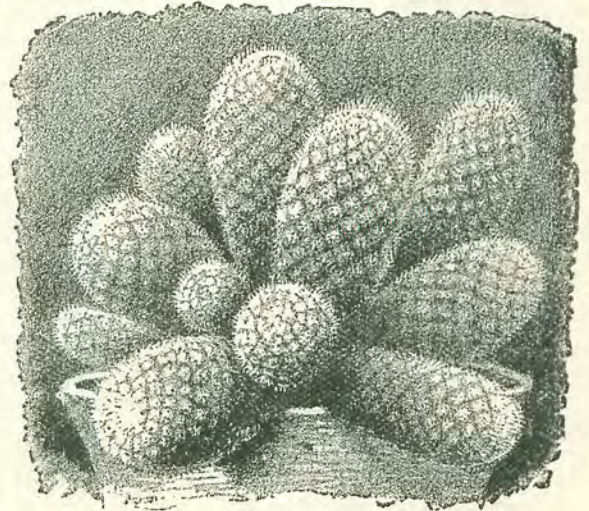


FIG. 4.—MAMILLARIA SUBECHINATA.

SOME RECIPES FROM AN OLD HOUSEKEEPER'S BOOK.

Tansy Pudding.—Take a large teacupful of fine bread-crumbs, throw them into a pint of boiling milk, put in a saucepan over a cool fire, and let them simmer a few minutes; then add six ounces of good butter, stir until quite melted, remove from the stove, add four well-beaten eggs. Have ready the juice of a few tansy leaves mixed with a little spinach juice, to make it green, mix all well together, sweeten to your taste with pounded white sugar. Border a pie dish with puff paste, put in the mixture and bake in moderate oven.

Carrot Pudding.—Pound and sift four ounces of biscuits, beat with six ounces of butter to a cream, add the red part of five or six carrots that have been boiled and rubbed through a sieve, four eggs, a gill of cream, two ounces of chopped almonds, and sugar to taste. Put in a buttered basin with buttered paper and cloth over the top, and steam for three hours.

Sanders.—Mince very finely half a pound of any kind of meat or poultry (raw or cooked), with a small onion, a piece of lemon peel, and a boned anchovy; add four ounces of fine bread-crumbs, salt, a very little cayenne, and some nutmeg. Put two ounces of butter in a saucepan, when melted, add the mince, etc., stir over the fire to mix well, then stir in the yolks of two eggs and remove from fire at once. If the eggs are large, sometimes one is enough. Make into cakes, dip them in white of egg, roll in bread-crumbs, fry in boiling fat and serve.

Potato Pudding.—Mash half a pound of boiled potatoes with a fork, add six ounces of butter, four ounces of pounded loaf sugar, one ounce of chopped almonds with three bitter almonds, and four eggs; beat the whole for half an hour. Bake or steam with buttered paper over the top. If baked, it should be served directly it is taken from the oven.

German Puffs.—Two eggs, two ounces of flour, two ounces of butter, a gill of milk, a little nutmeg and salt. Beat the butter to cream, add the flour, then the eggs and other ingredients, beat for ten minutes; butter some dariole tins or cups, half fill with the mixture, bake half an hour and serve.

Boiled Ground Rice Pudding.—Boil five ounces of ground rice in a pint of milk, with a quarter of a pound of butter; when the rice is cooked, add a quarter of a pound of white sugar, with which a large lemon has been grated, and half a nutmeg grated, add four eggs beaten up with two tablespoonfuls of milk, stir for a minute over a slow fire to mix well, then put in buttered basin, cover, and boil for an hour and a quarter. Serve with sauce or preserve.

Cheese Pudding.—Grate half a pound of mild rich cheese, add two beaten eggs and two tablespoonfuls of sifted bread-crumbs, put in a saucepan, add sufficient milk to moisten, stir over a slow fire until cooked, then put in a buttered dish and brown the top. Pepper and salt can be added if desired.

Duke of Buckingham's Pudding.—Half a pound of finely chopped suet, a quarter of a pound of raisins weighed after they are stoned, a quarter of a pound of flour, two teaspoonfuls of sugar, two eggs, a little nutmeg and ginger, mix well; put in buttered basin, tie down close, boil for five hours at least. Serve with white sauce, or with wine and powdered sugar.

Muffins.—To one pound of flour put half a pint of warm milk, in which you have melted one ounce of butter, add one egg, and a large tablespoonful of fresh barm. Let the dough rise two or three hours. Make your bakestone very hot, rub it with a little butter wrapped in a linen rag, put a spoonful of butter on the stone; when done one side, turn it and cook the other. This is the instruction in the original receipt. I find a tile on my oven sheet answers very well for baking muffins in the oven.

Crumpets.—Two recipes for making them. Take a pint of warm milk and water and a large dessertspoonful of yeast, beat in as much flour as will make a batter, rather thicker than for a batter pudding, beat it well, let it stand to rise two or three hours, and proceed as for muffins.

Second recipe.—Boil a pint of new milk, stir in a piece of butter half the size of a walnut, let it stand until new milk warm, then add to it two eggs, and a dessertspoonful of barm; shake in, beating all the time, flour enough to make it a thick batter, let stand an hour to rise. Proceed as for muffins.